DOINGWHATWORKS

DATA COLLECTION PLANNER:
REVIEWING THE USE OF AN EXISTING DATA SYSTEM

Purpose	This tool facilitates planning and tracking recommendations for data system improvements based on data collected from users. District administrators are encouraged to use this planner to document empirical questions to guide improvement actions, the results of data collection and analysis, and recommendations for improvement actions based on the reported findings.
	This planner should be updated regularly and discussed at meetings about data system improvement. The planner may be posted online to allow access and data entry by multiple departments interested in the use and improvement of a data system.
Materials	None
Media	None
Topic	Data-Driven Instructional Decision Making
Practice	Districtwide Data Systems

**Data Collection Planner:
Reviewing the Use of an Existing Data System**

Instructions

1. Questions: Collect questions on data use topics (e.g., assessment and accountability, professional development, information technology) from various district departments. Consider establishing a generic email address for question submission, such as questions@school.k12.state.us. Document questions in the table below. For follow-up purposes, you may wish to include the name and role of the person who proposed the question. District and school staff may need assistance in generating questions. To help district and school staff generate questions, suggest they think about such overarching questions as:

   - Are there parts of the database system that you don't know how to use or aren't aware of how they can be used?

   - What are your questions related to the different types of data that you can access?

   - Do you have questions about the skills needed to access and use the data?

   - Do you need to develop data reports or displays?

   - What kinds of decisions could one make using these data?

2. Findings: To answer questions, formally or informally coordinate with departments that collect information (e.g., for user satisfaction, challenges in using the data system) in the district. Collect data through surveys, focus groups, or other methods as appropriate. Document the findings from each question to track users' concerns and knowledge base. This information can be used to assess professional development needs.

3. Recommendations: Convene an advisory committee to discuss data system improvements and document the recommendations made in these formal meetings. Also document recommendations less formally collected from district staff and other experts with relevant experience. Recommendations may specify decisions or action steps for further investigation.

District administrators may adapt this tool or supplement it with a similar tracking table to document specific action steps, timeline, assignment of responsibilities, and status of improvement actions.

Questions	Findings	Recommendations
Example: *Do teachers use other sources of data outside the data system? Why?*	Example: *Teachers that were interviewed reported using another data system because it contained results from periodic, mini, and benchmark assessments.*	Example: *The committee recommended adding results from these assessments into the system to form a centralized place for data review.*
Example: *Do teachers create their own reports using the data system?*	Example: *Many teachers reported asking a coach to create a report because the coach knew how to transfer the data to Excel to create a graph of the results.*	Example: *The committee recommended adding a feature in the system that can create custom graphs.*
Example: *Who are the teachers most likely to use the data system?*	Example: *Focus group data showed that teachers in core subject areas used the system often. Other teachers did not use the system because they did not receive training or were never introduced to the benefits of the data system.*	Example: *The committee recommended exploring additional training opportunities and having the district work more closely with instructional leaders and coaches to encourage teachers to use the data system.*